

Slag processing plant continues forward

KATHIE R. MILLER
EDITOR

Preparation of the future site of Premier Industries slag processing plant continues, according to Rick Tabish of FX Solutions, who is managing the construction of the plant, which will turn slag into proppant for the oil and gas industry and pig iron for steel.

"We've constructed all the road surfaces and relocated the water that went through the area to accommodate Copper Environmental's site plan in

conformance with Superfund," he said during a telephone interview. "We've had to follow the rules and regulations [for Superfund]. We had to build a new ditch and reroute the water and created secondary containment. The storm water work was permitted and approved by DEQ [Montana Department of Environmental Quality]."

The next phase of work will include construction of the foundations for several buildings, including the slag processing plant – a 300 foot by 175 foot building,

a maintenance shop, a warehouse and an office.

Tabish also is in the process of working on getting a substation built to supply energy needed for the plant.

"We are demanding a lot of electricity," he said. "NorthWestern Energy is taking the lead on the study [to determine its effect on the power grid]. It is something that is completely out of our hands."

Tabish does not foresee any problems with securing an Air Quality Permit from DEQ.

"Bison Engineering of Helena has all the information, studies, pilot process studies," he said. "They are handling the permitting for us, and we do not anticipate any problems with air quality."

Tabish confirmed Premier Industries will employ upwards of 500 people at full production.

"We can only hire people as fast

as we can get the furnaces – so we won't start out with that many," he said. "We will have about 160 people working at each shift."

The plant will run 24 hours a day, seven days a week with three shifts, he said, and will need people for the loading and unloading of the slag, heaters, sales staff, engineers, maintenance, grounds and office staff.

In the meantime, Premier Industries has spent in excess of \$3.5 million at the site, which is located in the Mill Creek Tax Increment Finance Industrial District east of Anaconda off Mill Creek Highway, according to Tabish, who says they have hired all local contractors for the project thus far, including engineering firms, electrical construction firms

See SLAG on page 3

Rainbow moose

1913539 - R8SDMS

SLAG from Page 1

to assist with the design phase and a plumbing contractor.

"None of this is going to cost Anaconda a dime," he said. "We are trying to hold

up our end of the bargain by spending money in Anaconda. Our employees and contractors are spending money at area restaurants and businesses. We are very good for Anaconda."

Premier Industries is leasing 93 acres from Anaconda-Deer Lodge County for \$100 per month, with an option to purchase the property for \$1.

"It is being leased until the county gets it subdivided," Tabish said.

Veronica Waite

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